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ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON ITS TWENTY-SIXTH SESSION

Draft report

Addendum

Rapporteur: Jerzy Z. HOLZER (Poland)

Chapter IV. PROGRAMME QUESTIONS

B. Proposed programme of work for the biennium 1992-1993

1. Analysis of demographic variables at world level

1. The Commission was informed that the study on the impact of changes in reproductive behaviour on child survival had been initiated and was expected to be completed during the biennium 1992-1993. A study on the relationship between the status of women and child survival would also be undertaken during that period, provided sufficient resources became available.

2. With respect to internal migration and urbanization, the Commission was pleased to learn that the Proceedings of the Expert Group Meeting on the Feminization of Internal Migration, scheduled to take place in October 1991, would be published during the biennium. In addition, a manual on methods to measure internal migration would be published, provided extrabudgetary resources could be secured.

3. The Commission was also pleased to learn that the expansion and computerization of the data bank on international migration would continue. Given the increasing importance of forced migration, the Commission supported a proposed project focusing on refugees, displaced persons and other forced population movements.

4. The Commission noted that for the 1992-1993 biennium, work in the areas of women's status in relation to fertility would include the completion of several comparative and country case studies. The project on the impact of improvements of child survival on fertility was expected to be completed during the biennium.

5. The Commission was pleased to learn of plans for further studies in the area of fertility and family planning. An updated review of patterns of contraceptive use world wide is planned. The data underlying the publication would be made available on diskette. Contingent on extrabudgetary resources, studies of contraceptive use in relation to breast-feeding and of patterns and trends of birth-spacing would be initiated during the biennium. In addition, the Division planned to begin work towards a comprehensive global review of trends in the level and age pattern of fertility.

2. World population projections

6. Emphasizing the great demand for recurrent updating of the global estimates and projections of populations, the Commission recommended that preparation of estimates and projections of populations by country, urban and rural populations and urban agglomerations be continued with the same two-year periodicity.

7. The Commission was pleased to note that the 1992 revision would provide age and sex distributions and demographic indicators for countries with 200,000 inhabitants and more, that the new base date would be 1990, and that the projection range for urban agglomerations would be extended to 2010. Noting that the year 2025 was now only 35 years away, the Commission recommended that future projections extend the horizon to 2050, starting with the 1994 revision.

8. The Commission suggested that, in addition to its regular set of projections, the Population Division consider supplementary illustrative projections, such as different mortality assumptions, instant replacement-level fertility assumptions, or long-range projections.

9. Recognizing the importance and the complexity of urban-rural projections, the Commission requested the Population Division to explore the possibility of presenting results according to sex and age.

10. The Commission urged that efforts be made to obtain resources to allow the development of a user-friendly interface for the United Nations Population Projection Program (ABACUS), and also to further expand widespread dissemination of results from estimates and projections published by the Population Division.

11. The Commission emphasized the importance of updating the joint publication on population and sectoral estimates and projections undertaken by the Population Division, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). It strongly recommended that work of the ACC Ad Hoc Inter-agency Working Group continue in that direction.

3. Population policy and socio-economic development

12. The Commission was informed that with regard to comparative studies, work on the series Population Growth and Policies in Mega-Cities would be continued, and that reports on Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires were planned. In addition to the series on mega-cities, a project funded by UNFPA would look at the demographic and policy aspects relating to approximately 100 of the world's largest urban agglomerations. The compiled data and report from the project were expected to provide useful information to planners and policy makers on the various policy interventions that had been undertaken at the national and local levels.

13. The Commission noted with satisfaction that beginning in 1990, with the financial support of UNFPA, a project was begun on the status of women and population policies, focusing on policies relating to reproductive health. The project aimed to investigate national population policies relating to abortion, contraception, sterilization and maternal health.

14. The Commission was informed that international migration policies was another area expected to receive attention in the coming biennium. Building on the Population Division's 1982 review of international migration policies, the Population Division intended to prepare individual country summaries describing the important dimensions of international migration policies, including those relating to immigration, emigration, family reunification, labour migration, return migration, refugees and asylum-seekers.

15. The Commission was also informed that another project planned for the next biennium was a study of mortality policies, with a special focus on national policies on acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS). A report succinctly summarizing national population policies addressing that serious health threat would benefit from the cooperation of the World Health Organization (WHO) and information obtained from the Sixth United Nations Population Inquiry, as well as more recent national documents, articles and newspaper clippings.

16. The Commission was also informed of two additional activities, the Seventh United Nations Population Inquiry among Governments and the global population database. The Seventh Population Inquiry, was expected to be sent to Governments in early 1992. The third edition of the global policy database scheduled to be completed by the end of 1991 should be issued in 1992. The remarks provided by members of the Commission regarding their national population policy experiences would be very helpful in updating the population policy database. Every effort would be taken to ensure that reported population policies take into account the overall context of social and economic development policies.

17. The Commission encouraged further work on interrelations between population and development, development of techniques for utilizing demographic factors in the planning process and methods for dealing with interrelations between population, resources, environment and development. The Commission suggested that all appropriate means be employed to ensure that the findings of research studies reach policy makers and the public.

18. The Commission stressed the importance of continued analysis of the socio-economic implications of the aging of populations in both developed and developing countries. The Commission also stressed that in its further work on population aging, the Population Division should consider various alternative measures of the elderly population and its components.

19. The Commission recommended that, subject to the availability of resources, a database should be prepared on experiences in integrating population issues into development planning. Such a database should include information on institutional arrangements, training, research and the use of demographic data, planning models, methodologies and software.

20. The Commission recommended that (subject to the availability of resources) microcomputer-based software for making population-related projections for development planning be prepared and disseminated widely. The Commission also endorsed the organization of a workshop on that topic.

21. Noting that the microcomputer-oriented database on population, resources, environment and development could be most useful in analysing interrelationships between those variables, the Commission endorsed the preparation of an updated version containing variables relating to resources and the environment.

22. The Commission noted the need to review the state of knowledge on relationships between population, environment and development, and expressed approval of plans to organize an expert group meeting on that topic in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund and the German Foundation for International Development.

4. Monitoring, review and appraisal, coordination and dissemination of population information

23. The monitoring of world population trends and policies and review and appraisal of progress made towards the implementation of the World Population Plan of Action are discussed in chapter II.

24. With respect to activities in the area of dissemination of population information, the Population Commission was informed that the Population Division would continue to: (a) issue all recurrent and non-recurrent publications; (b) improve dissemination by developing better distribution lists to permit targetting of the most appropriate audience for each publication; (c) find a better balance in presentation in order to meet the needs of population professionals and also to reach the widest possible audiences; and (d) increase output in computer-usable format, both in the form of databases and of software.

25. With regard to global POPIN, the Population Division would work together with UNFPA to formalize an agreement on the management of POPIN. A meeting of the POPIN Advisory Committee would be convened during the first half of 1991 and, contingent upon the availability of extrabudgetary resources, full-scale POPIN activities would be resumed during the second half of 1991. A key feature of the activities would be an even closer working relationship with the regional POPIN programmes.

5. Technical cooperation

26. The Commission considered the proposed programme of work of the Department of Technical Cooperation for Development in the field of population for the biennium 1992-1993 (E/CN.9/1991/CRP.2), which was an elaboration of the activities to be carried out during the biennium 1992-1993 as stipulated in more general terms in the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997. Those activities included (a) support of technical cooperation projects in three main areas, namely, training, national research on population dynamics, and national population policy programmes and offices; and (b) analysis and evaluation of technical cooperation activities in population.